



## **Bangladesh - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 27 September 2012**

### **Information on Bangladesh Nationalist Party member Ilias Ali**

In April 2012 *Amnesty International* notes:

“Ilias Ali, secretary of the Sylhet Division of the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) disappeared together with his driver Ansar Ali on 17 April. His is the latest in a spate of disappearances in which security forces, including the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), have been implicated, though they deny detaining those missing” (Amnesty International (24 April 2012) *Bangladesh: Authorities must account for deaths amid spate of disappearances*).

In July 2012 *Odhikar* states:

“On April 18, 2012, former Member of Parliament and Organising Secretary of the Central Committee of BNP [9], M Ilias Ali and his driver Ansar Ali were allegedly picked up by members of law enforcing agencies from Banani in Dhaka city. Tahsina Rushdir, wife of Ilias Ali, claimed that her husband had been picked up by the 'agency of the government' “ (Odhikar (1 July 2012) *Human Rights Monitoring Report: January – June 2012*, point 16).

The *Asian Human Rights Commission* in April 2012 notes:

“Mr. M Ilias Ali, a former Member of Parliament and Organising Secretary of the main opposition political party – Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and the driver of his car named Mr. Ansar, have been found missing since both of them left the former's residence by a private car at around 9:30pm on 17 April 2012. The Gulshan police of Dhaka city reportedly claimed that the police found Ilias' car in a park with his mobile phone in it with all the doors of the car opened in an abandoned condition. Since then the whereabouts of Ilias has not been known” (Asian Human Rights Commission (20 April 2012) *Bangladesh: Disappearance will never stop unless impunity is ended*).

A report issued in April 2012 by *The Guardian* states:

“Police in Bangladesh used baton charges, live bullets and teargas on Sunday in clashes with demonstrators protesting against the alleged abduction of a senior politician. The violence was the most acute for many months in the unstable state. In Dhaka, the capital, dozens of small devices were reported to have exploded and 20 arrests were made. In the north-eastern city of Sylhet, 12 people were reported to have been injured and more than 50 detained in running battles. On Sunday night a tense calm had been established, although tens of thousands of security personnel remained deployed across the country in anticipation of further clashes on Monday. The crisis was sparked by the disappearance last Tuesday of Ilias Ali, a key organiser with the Bangladesh Nationalist party (BNP). Ali was the latest in a series of political activists who have apparently been abducted, raising fears

of a concerted campaign of intimidation aimed at opposition politicians. At least 22 people have gone missing so far this year, the local human rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra said” (The Guardian (22 April 2012) *Bangladesh police out in force as tension rises over missing politician*).

This document also points out that:

“Ali's wife, Tahsina Rushdir, said her husband, a veteran activist who had risen through the ranks of the BNP, had been campaigning for the party in Sylhet before he disappeared. ‘He told me that the government was making a list of people who were being critical about them. He wouldn't be picked up this way unless he had posed a threat to the government,’ she said. ‘The waiting is very difficult.’ More than 30 people were injured in clashes between opposition activists and the police on the streets of Dhaka last week following the news that Ali was missing” (ibid).

A report released in May 2012 by *BBC News* notes:

“The BNP leads an 18-party alliance that has been protesting at alleged government involvement in the disappearance of dozens of people in recent months. There is particular concern over the fate of a senior BNP politician, Ilias Ali, who went missing in April. Police found his car abandoned in Dhaka and his driver is also missing. The government denies ordering his abduction” (BBC News (16 May 2012) *Protests in Bangladesh after opposition leaders arrested*).

## References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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